

purpose. He deprecated this carelessness—he would not call it by a stronger name—in this total disregard of public health, and he had felt it his duty to bring the matter before the court, as a caution to other bodies in their choice of sites for building.

Dr. Southwood Smith, in an able speech, called the attention of the court to a particular case, as an exemplar of a class of cases which appeared to him to require the immediate and earnest attention of the commission. The General Board of Health have directed one of their medical superintending inspectors, Mr. Grainger, together with Dr. Arthur Parro, to examine the present condition of the work-houses of the metropolis, and more especially the state of the various establishments for pauper children, such as that at Tooting. The very first report made by these gentlemen on the establishments for pauper children, contains a representation as to the Norwood House of Industry for children in connection with the parish of Lambeth, showing, amongst other points, the existence of an open ditch in the neighbourhood, formed by the drains of the establishment; that immediately after a severe storm, in August, 1846, when the drains were overflowed, 120 of the children were seized with ophthalmia in the course of three days, and that since improvements were made in the privies, ophthalmia, previously a prominent and prevailing disease among the children, had nearly disappeared. The time may be short (said Dr. Smith) that is left us to labour at the work of prevention, and one of the most obvious means of prevention is the immediate removal from the close neighbourhood of dwelling houses of such nuisances as that in question. I therefore move, "that the surveyor inspect the open ditch near the Norwood House of Industry, and report to the Committee of Works thereon." I earnestly hope (he continued) that we may be spared any further visitation of cholera; but we cannot conceal from ourselves that it is hovering over us, and that it may swoop down upon us at any instant.

Mr. Broderip seconded the motion, and it was ultimately carried.

Resolutions were passed that two additional assistant surveyors be appointed at salaries of 250l. per annum; and that all future appointments be for one year only, at the expiration of which time they are to be re-considered.

The Drainage of the New Palace at Westminster.—The clerk read a document from Mr. Barry, on the subject of the drainage of the new Houses of Parliament, the title of which has already appeared in our pages.

Mr. Baillair said this question reminded him of a controversy that took place in France, commencing in pamphlets, and ending in volumes, and he wished to know where this controversy was to end.—Mr. Broderip said, where two gentlemen were at issue so much, a lawyer would say let a jury come at once.—The Rev. W. Stone said it was most important the principles contained in the two systems should be properly ascertained.

Mr. Leslie thought any money spent on this subject well bestowed, to show the value of the two systems, and moved, "That at the request of Mr. Barry, and for the advantage of the public, the charges made by Mr. Austin, with Mr. Barry's reply, be printed in juxtaposition, together with the subsequent rejoinders of both these gentlemen."—Motion put and agreed to.

Miscellaneous.

"ARTISTS' CONVERSATIONS."—The first, for the present session, of the series of conversations, given annually under this title at the Freemasons' Tavern, was held on the 27th ult. Amongst the works of art exhibited were a charming drawing of "Fox-Gloves," by Mrs. Withers; a nice little picture, in Topham's style, by Mr. J. H. Mole; and a portfolio of sketches by the same artist; a clever miniature by Miss Cole; and a drawing in the Temple Church, by her sister Miss E. Cole. Mr. E. A. Goodall exhibited an interior, more like some recent works of his brother than his paintings are usually, and a portfolio of sketches. There were also a set of sketches in Tasmania, by Mr. Skinner Prout; illustrations of the Collegiate Church of the Holy Trinity, at Edinburgh, by Mr. D. Wilson; and other interesting matters. This association has now been in existence about twenty years, and in the root whence sprung "The Graphic,"—but it has possessed the even tenour of its useful way so quietly that it is less known than many bodies of more recent establishment. The want of a more distinctive title, too, has perhaps had something to do with this.

MONUMENT TO PICTON.—The monument erected at Camarthen to the memory of Picton is at last completed. According to the Cambrian, which terms it a monument of bad management, it is a clumsy disproportioned pyramid, manifesting by the rapid tapering of the shaft that the cash of the managers was exhausted, or that the builder was tired of his job. At the base run out four promontories, from each of which a large cannon, with feeble carriage, frowns on passengers as they approach what they may mistake for the chimney of a manufactory.

SUSPENSION BRIDGE AT PERTH.—The bridge which is erected over the Danube at Perth, was commenced in 1840, according to the designs and under the direction of William Tierney Clark, civil engineer, and has just been completed at a cost of 650,000l. This bridge has a clear waterway of 1250 feet, the centre span or opening being 670 feet. The height of the suspension towers from the foundation is 200 feet, being founded in 50 feet of water. The sectional area of the suspending chains is 520 square inches of wrought iron, and the total weight of the same 1,300 tons.

PRESERVATION OF BOOKS.—About 25 years ago I was annoyed by finding the backs of several rows of books, some in a bookcase having glazed doors, which were kept locked, and others on adjoining open shelves, frequently mildewed. Wiping them carefully cleaned them only for a time, for fresh crops of mildew speedily disfigured them again. Remembering to have seen my father, who always made his own ink, finish off by pouring a small glass of spirits of wine into the ink jar, in order to prevent its becoming mouldy, I lightly washed over the backs and covers of the books with spirits of wine, using, as a brush, the feather of a goose-quill. I frequently saw the books during the next five years, and I have occasionally seen them since, and there has not, so far as I am aware, been a single spot of mildew on them since the spirits of wine were applied. I have used spirits of wine to prevent mildew with equally good effect in other cases. N. R.

THE LOUVRE.—The Minister of Public Works, M. Vivien, has prepared an elaborate report of the present condition of the Louvre, for necessary repairs and embellishments, as well as opening other saloons. The sum required for the present year is 200,000 francs, and 1,800,000 for the following one. The report is at considerable length; the principal features being—1st, The entire reconstruction of the roof of the grand gallery, to admit the light from the top, and to close the side windows. 2nd, To redecorate and alter the disposition of the *Grand Salon*, and the *Salon des Sept Cheminées*. 3rd, The entire reparation of the Gallery of Apollo. In the budget for the present year, the first item is calculated to cause an expenditure of 160,000 francs. The redecoration of the *Grand Salon* is estimated at 600,000 francs; the *Salon des Sept Cheminées* is set down at 400,000 francs; and finally, the expenses calculated to restore the Gallery of Apollo at 1,000,000 francs. In consequence of this report, a commission was nominated to consider the proposition, and on its meeting, in the Hall of the Institute, most of the distinguished artists of Paris were present. The plan given by M. Dubau, the architect, was the subject of a very learned discussion. The style of ornamentation especially was investigated. M. Ingres proposed a red ground, with very rich decorative details; his opinion was strongly enforced by Messieurs Drolling and Horace Vernet. M. Delacroix suggested a more sober colour as the ground, with very slight ornament. It was remarked that good colourists had always preferred a ground that would lower the lustre of tints, and render their brilliancy more harmonious by opposition with a positive vivid colour; while, on the other hand, it was agreed that where colour was not the characteristic of artistic works, a more unobtrusive ground would give them due advantage. The proposition of Messieurs Ingres and Horace Vernet obtained the suffrages of the commission, and was finally adopted.—*Art Journal*.

* The new number of the *Art-Journal*, with two fine engravings from the Vernon Gallery, and a profusion of other illustrations, is quite a marvel in periodical literature.

PROJECTED WORKS.—Advertisements have been issued for tenders, by 18th February, for building a new savings' bank and a new market-hall and corn-exchange, at Lichfield; by 20th, for the erection of a house at Harbledown; by 8th, for erecting prisoners' cells, kitchen offices, infirmary, boundary wall, &c., at the county jail, Huntingdon; by 21st, for the various works to be done in the erection of the poor's hospital new buildings and offices at Paisley; by 6th, for the erection of a parsonage-house and offices at Ripon; and by 6th, for a survey of the town of Abingdon, Berks, and a report of the expense of draining the same by proper and efficient sewerage.

GAS: REDUCTIONS IN THE PRICE, &c.—In consequence of past reductions at Doncaster, the consumption has so much increased that the Company have declared their intention, on that special ground, to repeat the experiment, by a further reduction to 4s. 7d. per 1,000 cubic feet.—The Cambridge shareholders appear to have now also as hopeful a prospect before their eyes in determining to carry out the like principle. They have just announced a reduction from 7s. to 6s., and the chairman "also stated that the committee of management had reason to hope that ultimately no town in the kingdom, of comparative size and population, would be lighted by gas at a less expense than Cambridge."—At Fareham, on the contrary, the company have the stupidity to refuse to reduce their price to 7s. 6d., while the consumers have not only determined not to pay more, but have been offered a supply at 5s. 6d.—The company at Brigg have reduced their price from 10s. to 9s. 4d., with the "hope that there will be an increase of private consumers," which there doubtless will be, though only to an extent equivalent to the smallness of the reduction, or rather to the largeness of the remainder. They had already supplied the railway station at 5s., exclusive of pipes and fittings.—It is proposed to light the shire hall at Chelmsford from gas jets outside the windows, a principle which we learn has been adopted in other court houses with excellent effect, both in brilliancy and comfort.—A petition to the Commons is in progress at Birmingham, according to the *Journal*, praying them to enact that all gas meters shall be properly proved and inspected, as measures generally are, and that the irresponsibility of companies, or of those by whom meters are supplied, as well as the liability of meters to register incorrectly, may be thus or otherwise properly checked. Mr. N. Scholfield, M.P., is to introduce a bill in the forthcoming session to remedy this evil.

IMPROVEMENT OF OPEN SPACES.—With reference to the suggestions for laying out Kennington-common, and the improvement of Camberwell-green, in your last number, allow me to suggest for further comment, that many wide spaces and thoroughfares round London are easily susceptible of similar improvement: Whitechapel-road, Islington, Blackfriars-road, and the various so called greens might be planted and systematically laid out, so as to present a pleasing aspect and healthy promenade, and that at comparatively trifling expense. In many of the narrowest roads, the small gardens in front of the houses should be purchased for the widening of the thoroughfares before the value is enhanced by their being converted into shops,—a process which is rapidly taking place in all the roads leading to the metropolis. In short, a public inspector ought to be appointed for the better regulation of such matters; it would not fail ultimately to save the public from great inconvenience as well as expense. For while we are going to great expense in widening some thoroughfares, we are suffering others to be as fast closed up.—*Footpad*.

LARGE CASTING.—A cylinder, 95 inches in diameter and 10 feet stroke, was cast yesterday afternoon, at the Novelty Works, in presence of a large number of persons, who had been invited to witness the operation. No less than 25,000 lbs. of molten iron were used for the casting, which, when finished, will be about 20,000 lbs. This is, probably, the largest and heaviest casting of the kind ever made; and is for the first of Collins's line of sea-steamer, which are now in a great state of forwardness, two of which, we learn, will be launched early in January.—*American Paper*.